

The Ship of Fools

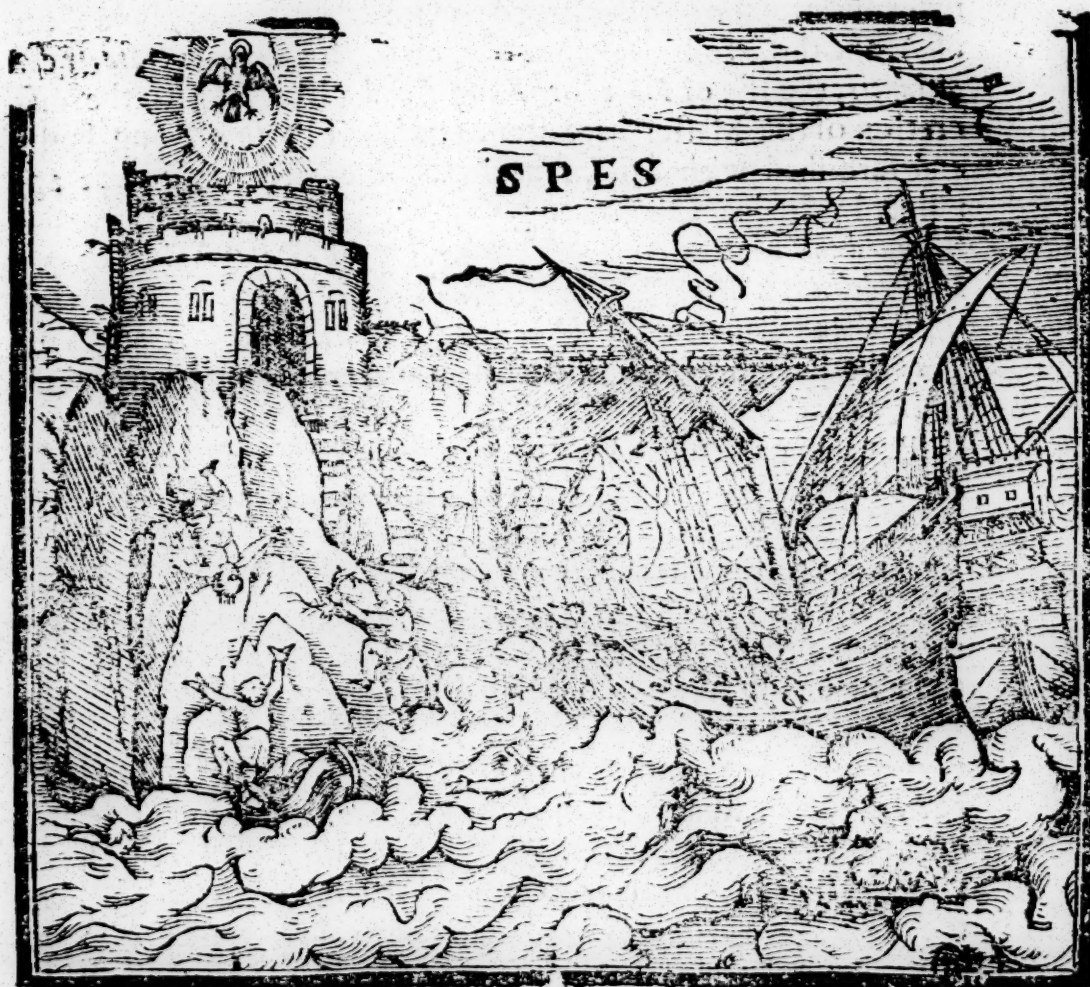
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Fully Fraught and Richly Laden with Asses, Fools,
Jack-daws, Ninnihammers, Coxcombs, Slender-wits, Shal-
lowbrains, Paper-skuls, Simpletons, Nickumpoops, Wifekakers, Dunces,
and Blockheads.

Declaring their several Natures, Manners, and Constitutions; the
occasion why this Ship was built, with the places of their intended Voy-
age, and a list of the Officers that bear Command therein.

*If for this Voyage any have a mind,
They with Jack Adams may acceptance find,
Who will strain hard ere they shall stay behind.*

Licensed, Roger L'Estrange.



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THE SHIP OF FOOLS.



Here is but two sorts of People which inhabit the whole world, whereof some are *wise*, and the rest *otherwise*; but this latter sort doth as infinitely exceed the former in number, as *Jack-daws* do *Pheasants*. *Bears* do *Unicorns*, or *Knavish Lawyers* the number of those that are honest; not a City, Town, or Country Village, but is pestered with them:

And though thousands of them die every year, yet still their number encreases *ad infinitum*: Wherefore it was agreed by several persons to build a large Ship for the transportation of many of them, (for one ship though never so big cannot hold them all) and those to be transported into the Land of *Utopia*, new *Atlantis*, the *Isle of Pines*, or *Fairy Land*, according to the discretion of the Master hereafter named. The ship being built, and furnished with Sails, Anchors, Cables, &c. these were appointed principal Officers to go in her,

Jack Adams Master,

Hobbadeboody Masters Mate,

Jack Frank Gunner, (Mate,

Tatt the Packthredman Gunners

Jack Adams Nurse Purser,

Timothy Paperskul Pilot,

Stephen Scaterbrains Steward

Leonard Lackwit Boatswain,

Abraham Ninny Chyrurgion,

Simon Simpleton Swabber.

But though the ship were thus ready fitted for a voyage, there came in very few voluntarily to be transported (for few people will confess themselves fools) therefore the Master that he might not linger out too much time, commanded his *Press-Masters* and other Officers belonging to the ship, to search about, and whom they found that belonged to the Foundation of *Gotam* Colledge, to bring before him without Bail or Mainprize.

According to his Order, away they flew swift as lightning unto all places in hunt of their Quarry; and long they had not been out, when some of them returned, bringing along with them about twenty or thirty persons, who for their outward forms seemed to be *Wise*, but in their actions were found far *Otherwise*; and these were such people as were bound for other mens debts; some of them pleaded very hard, that what they did was only in kindness,

ness, but *Jack* told them that would not excuse them of folly, and therefore they were thrust into the ship to wait for more company.

Which soon they had, for straight some other Officers came hailing of a dozen more before the Master of the ship, and these were such who were bail for other persons; some for Debtors, other for Thieves, Whores, and such like Cattle; they were exceeding loath to be ships, and pleaded hard to *Jack* for a reprieve, alleading that the persons for whom they were bail would appear at the time and quit them; In the mean space said *Jack*, we will secure you, and if they make their appearance (especially them that are guilty of Theft) then we will release you, and put them in your rooms.

Scarcely were they clapt under deck, when there was half a dozen more brought in to be transported; these (said the Officers) are such as let their Wives rule over them; Hen-peckt fellows, that if they see other men in bed with their wives, yet durst not grumble at it for fear of displeasing them. But *Jack* said he could not conceive how they should come under the notion of Fools, since it might be a wise mans fortune to have a domineering wag-tail to his wife. To this the Officers replied, that these men could not in no ways be excused, for they had been married before to Shrews, and yet having buried them, they would adventure to marry again. Nay then said *Jack*, there is no redemption for them; these who have been once in the flame, and being recovered will throw themselves again into the fire, it is pity but that they should be burnt, therefore secure them in the Hold, for they shall all go as sure as a Gun.

Soon after, another pack of Officers had brought in a whole bundle of people, enough indeed to stow half the ship; and these were such persons as are iclapp'd Lovers, or such as we may term *Loving Fools*, that spend their time in writing *Love Letters*, sighing sobbing, and puling for the absence of their Mistress, esteeming her shoo-string a high favour to grace their hat, and spending more time in reading the *Academy of Complements*, then in the *New Testament*, making more account of one of her smiles, then of the joys of Heaven: comparing her Hair to *Threds of Gold*, her Fore-head to *Saphir* or *Chrystal*, her Eyes to *Diamonds*, her Lips to *Rubies*, her Teeth to *Pearl*, her Breath to *Frankincense*, and her whole Body to *Alabaster*; nor will they be satisfied

but that the seven Liberal Sciences, and the four Cardinal Vertues have taken up their habitation in that pretty little body of hers; when perhaps for all his praising and adoring her, setting aside her outward attire, she is no other then a homely Blowse, and indued with no more understanding, then just to distinguish her from a brut Beast.

Jack Adams having heard the character of these people, concluded them to be the most fools of all other, to spend their time in great trouble and vexation, for the purchasing of that which they had better be without; for (said he) what are those women? take away their advantages of *Dress* and *Jewels*, and they are nothing pleasing to look on, and for their conversation, they are a plague and trouble to the whole house, being alwayes either scolding, pouting, sullen, wroving, wrangling, or so extravagantly wanton as not to be endured, and therefore those who shall so torment themselves for such kind of creatures, must needs be fools, and so by consequence belong to our ship.

Soon after was brought in a company of *Lawyers* *Clyents*, who for the matter of five shillings, would go to Law and spend five pound. If their neighbours horse did but look into their ground, it was an *Action of Trespass*, and must be decided by Law, *Friends* cannot end the matter, until the Lawyer have got all their money, and then their *Suit* ceases. Are these wise men think you (quoth *Jack*) that when two honest men may end the controversy, will spend a great deal of money to have it at last decided otherwise; no surely that cannot be, therefore put them in the ship, for they belong to us.

Then came two *Officers* pulling and hailing a *Smart* fat-faced robustical fellow, who hung an ars strongly, being loath to be reckoned among the *Fools*; This man, said the *Officers* is a *Woolman* by Trade, and is so silly, as to venture his soul for cheating the poor of some few pence, which they have dearly earned; But *Jack* had not patience to hear any more, bidding them to let him go, saying, that he was rather to be reckoned among the *Knaves* then *Fools*.

No sooner had they let him go, but some other officers brought in a parcel of decayed *Drunkards*, such who having an *Estate* left them by their friends, yet consume themselves to maintain their *Hostesses*, making themselves beggars to enrich them, their purses lean, that their *Hostesses* sides might be fat, who when all is spent

spent, thrust them out of doors, when they have time to consider of their folly, and cannot remedy it : These said *Jack* cannot be excused from going, for now their money is spent, neither Vintners, Tapsters, nor Hostesses will plead any thing at all for their stay.

Next the Officers brought in about eight or ten brave Gallants who yet thought scorn to be counted fools ; *Jack* asking where they had them, they told him they pickt them up in a Bowling-green ; for said they, if you should but observe their ridiculous posture and actions in Bowling, you would conclude them to be meer Anticks ; Their Ceremony in delivering the Bowl, leaning their bodies first on this side, then on that, according as they would have the Bowle to go, crying flee, flee, flee, with a pox on't if it comes too short, as if the deaf Bowle could hear their words, or the leaning and wring of their bodies to and fro, could carry the Bowle to which side they please. Indeed said *Jack*, should poor men be guilty of such folly, they would be accounted meer Fools, but being they are Gentlemen, they have something more priviledge, and therefore we will excuse them for this time, in hopes that they will rectifie their error.

These was no sooner dispatcht, but there was brought in a company, who had consumed much precious time and treasure in finding out the Philosophers Stone, still dreaming of being rich, till they found themselves meer beggars. *Jack* laughed heartily at them for their folly, telling them he would give them a Receipt for the making that Stone, far better then ever they yet practised, and which if they put in execution, it would assuredly come to pass.

The Receipt for making the Philosophers Stone.

Take two quarts of the Oyl that is squeezed out of a Flint, mingled with a pint of Hens milk, put to it the left eye of a flying Toad dryed and beaten to powder, add thereto the soft Row of a live Red-herring, with two ounces of the infusion of a Tench of the Mountains : Let these boyl four hours over a fire made of Isickles, then strain it through a Deal-board, and when it is cold, it turns to the Philosophers Stone.

But said *Jack*, these Ingredients are not to be had in this Countrey, though in the *Ile of Pines* (where they make Millstones of Diamonds) they are as common as Lice among beggars, and therefore, you shall be transported thither to try further conclusions.

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Their sentence being past, next was brought in a bundle of men, women, and maids, *omnium gatherum*, being such as had great recourse to Astrologers, Wizards, or Fortunetellers: Married men went to them to know when their wives should die, or if they should marry again, whether they should light of any better; and scarce were they gone, when perhaps their wives would come to know when they should bury their husbands, or if they should have any more when they were dead, whether they should be of a kind nature or no; and such as they can domineer over at their pleasure. Some come to them about things lost or stollen, and the young maids forsooth, would needs know when they should have husbands. The Astrologers consults with the stars, erects his Scheme, tells them that *Jupiter* is in a Trine with *Venus*, and *Mercury* Biquintile to *Luna*, *Sol* is aspected with *Saturn*, and *Mars* Retrograde in the Square of the eleventh house; yet the benigne Planet *Jupiter* being in *Semisextile* with *Caput Draconis*, and the *Dogstar* and *Mercury* in opposition in the *Tredecile* of *Mars*, all their designs shall have good success, and every thing shall happen according as they would desire. The Questionist here upon admireth the Astrologers skill, wonders at his hard words, gives him his money (aye that's the knack of the business) goes home very well contented, and so by this means makes himself liable to go in the ship of fools for believing such persons, who when they are alive, having all the twelve houses of Heaven at command, yet cannot reserve one of them to themselves, but must needs go to Hell when they are dead for their lying.

The next that the Officers brought in, were such persons as are known by the name of *Jack Puddings*, which abound much at *Bartholmew Fair*, and are seen almost all Summer long in the afternoons on Mountebanks stages, either in *More fields*, or *Lincolns-inn fields*. to the great advantage of the Noble Science of Pocket-picking. *Jack* wondred to see so many of his brethren brought in, yet because there was so many of other fools, and that he also used to practice that mystery of a *Jack Pudding* himself at *Bartholmew Fair*, he told them they should be excused for that time, adding this reason, *That though none but fools would take on them that employment, yet he that was a fool, could not well perform it: and therefore in stead of them, said he, we will take along with us such persons who having business to do, yet will spend a whole after-noons time to behold their fooleries.*

The

The next sort of fools that were brought in, were such, *that if their finger were but cut, would run presently to a Chirurgion, or if their guts were but wrung with a f--t, would make use of a Physitian, and an Apothecary.* For these three sorts of people, said Jack, *Chyrurgians, Physitians, and Apothecaries, I never think of them, but with a Libera nos.* As for *Chirurgions*, how much matter will they make of a prick't finger, and let your sore be never so slight, it shall make your purse *Sound* in the paying for it; when, were not men fools, let the wound be never so great, if they did but wash it with a maids water that were above twenty years of age, or put some *Tobacco-ashes* into it, and it will heal it immediately. Then for the *Physicians*, how many do they unnecessarily *dispatch* before their time, what with their damned poysonous *Potion, Scarifications, Incisions, excessive bleedings, &c.* giving people *Mans-grease* under the name of *Mummy*, if men were not meer fools, the Devil himself if he were sick would not receive so much as a *Glister* at their hands; and for the *Apothecaries* who furnishes the *Physicians* with weapons wherewith they kill folks, are not men meer fools to go to them, who will not sell thee a white *Dogs-turd* in powder without a great deal of coin, nor send you to your long home under much grief and pain, and a vast expence of money besides, therefore all these things considered, it cannot be denied but that their patients must needs gang along with me in the ship of fools.

Next was brought in a sort of persons called *Medlers*, not *Open-arses*, such as grows upon *Trees*, But *open-mouth'd people, that are always meddling with other mens matters, and like the other sort of Medlers, never good till they are rotten*: Yet here I do not mean only such as thrust themselves into other mens businesses, for which they have no thanks for their labour; But also those who are *busying their brains about foolish Chymera's, idle impossibilities, such as they are assured of will never come to pass.* Thus you shall have one man tormenting himself, how that if he were a *King*, what new *Laws* he would have made, and what old ones abrogated; how he would advance all his friends and acquaintance, and imprison all those who had done him any wrong, or that he did not affect; what *Castles, Towers, and rare works* he would do, and so intent is his mind upon his *King-ship*, that if one should come to him at that time, and strike him upon his noddle, he would go near to cry out *treason, treason.* Another perhaps scarce worth a three pence; yet turmoils his head about raising an *Army* to fight
against

against the Great Turk, or at leastwise to pull the Pope out of his Chair; He is much troubled to cast up what this Army will stand him in daily pay, and whom he shall make Colonels and Captains under him; And this thought commonly shall possess him, until such time, as growing hungry, he then leaves off his Warlike thoughts, and bethinks him where he shall get a Dinner. Another is more wickedly foolish, and his thoughts are occupied, how that if he had a great Estate, what number of Whores to keep, what hours to set apart for Drinking, Diceing, Drabbing, &c. but no thoughts of any thing that is good. These strange kind of ridiculous follies caused one of our modern Poets thus to write,

*This folly 'tis makes one man sit and plot,
what is by traffique with Virginia got,
that it would cost to furnish him a fleet,
that should with all the Spanish Navy meet*

*when as (poor fool) perhaps besides his Coat,
He is not worth a Portsmouth passage boat,
Nor never means to travel so much Sea,
As from High-Ferry to Southampton Bay.*

The next sort sort of fools that were brought in, were such whose Ancestors were substantial Yeomen, kept good houses for the poor, and employed a great many people at work, whereby they got an indifferent competent estate, going always under the name of Good-man, and Good-wife; But now the young Prodigal their son coming to enjoy the Estate, forthwith he byes a Coat of Arms of the Herald, and must be stiled Master: such a one, at every word, when if he would have been ruled by the Poet,

*He might with Goodman have contented bin,
where now there's scarce a Goodman of his kin-*

Indeed said Jack, Honours change manners, and worth does not always go by Gentility, therefore those who crack the back of their Estate to purchase a Title which they do not deserve, nor cannot maintain; let their thoughts be never so haughty, nor their pride never so towering, nolens volens, they must go along with me in the ship of Fools.

The last that was brought in (which made up the ships full lading) was a Cheese monger, who had sold a special Gelding, to be paid when the stones of Cripplegate Church shall help to pave Cheapside street. However the Gentleman had the Horse, and I hope will have more wit then to pay for him 'till it is due, which we desire shall never be seen by us, nor our posterity.

And now Jack having gotten full lading, intends to bid his friends at Clerken-well adue) for whom it is judged there will be much lamentation) and then to steer his course for the Isle of Pines.

*Intending to set Sails the next fair wind,
Though he shall still leave store of Fools behind.*

F I N I S